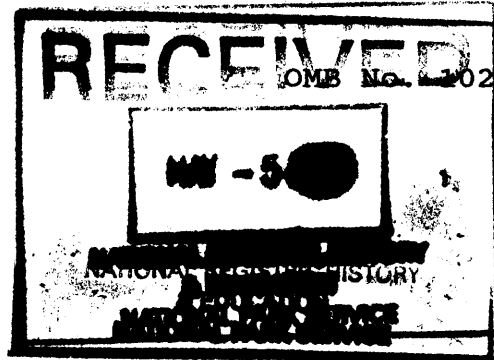


NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



623

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Wintersmith Park Historic District

other names/site number Wintersmith Park

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number E. 18th Street and Scenic Drive not for publication N/A
city or town Ada vicinity _____
state Oklahoma code OK county Pontotoc code 123
zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Bob Decker
Signature of certifying official 5-1-00 Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the
National Register

See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the
National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain): _____

Elsa H. Beall 6-2-00

Jan
Signature of Keeper Date
of Action

=====

5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>9</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>19</u>	<u>7</u>	structures
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	objects
<u>24</u>	<u>17</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: Outdoor Recreation
LANDSCAPE City Park

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: Outdoor recreation
LANDSCAPE City Park

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Park Service Rustic

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof ASPHALT
walls STONE-sandstone
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

8. Statement of Significance

=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1907-1950

=====
8. Statement of Significance (Continued)
=====

Significant Dates 1907
1933
1934
1939

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder NPS/CCC/WPA: Kroeger, Charles E., Landscape Architect;
Toler, G.E., Engineer; Ferguson, Robert, Building Architect

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====
9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)
 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
 State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property 143

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
1	<u>14</u>	<u>714400</u>	<u>3849510</u>	3	<u>14</u>	<u>715100</u>	<u>3848900</u>
2	<u>14</u>	<u>715100</u>	<u>3849510</u>	4	<u>14</u>	<u>715300</u>	<u>3848900</u>

X See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Jim Gabbert, Architectural Historian

organization State Historic Preservation Office date _____

street & number 2704 Villa Prom, Shepherd Mall telephone (405) 522-4478

city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73107

=====
Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Ada

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Wintersmith Park Historic
District
name of property
Pontotoc County, Oklahoma
county and State

SUMMARY

Located on the southeastern fringe of the city of Ada, Wintersmith Park combines a tree-filled ravine, a small placid lake, and stretches of open areas into a recreational facility long used by area residents. The park is roughly rectangular in shape. It is bounded on the north by East 18th Street. The western boundary follows the right-of-way of Scenic Drive as it meanders gently in a southeasterly direction. At the junction of Scenic Drive and Wintersmith Drive, the boundary moves east then north to the $\frac{1}{2}$ section line, where it moves directly east 1,320 feet, north again approximately 600 feet, and back west 660 feet, enclosing a large wooded area. A northern turn back to 18th Street completes the perimeter. The park is now surrounded by built-up residential neighborhoods dating from the 1950s to the present. Within the confines of the park are structures and facilities spanning the life of the park, but primarily configured to conform to the planned landscape as defined by National Park Service landscape architects and the 1933 Civilian Conservation Corps park plan.

The recreational buildings, sites, objects, and structures contained within the park's boundaries comprise the Wintersmith Park Historic District. The core of the park is the small lake created by the damming of Lake Creek in 1907. The Civilian Conservation Corps, utilizing guidelines supplied by the National Park Service, created a rustic, scenic park with the lake and the creek's ravine as the focal point. Hand-hewn native stone was used to create buildings and structures that enhanced the natural beauty of the area. The work of the CCC was continued by the Works Progress Administration at the end of the 1930s, adding more amenities to the park. Later improvements and additions to the park made by the city of Ada did little to detract from the overall design set forth by the CCC.

The Park can be divided into two distinct areas, above (north of) the dam and below (south of) the dam. The area below the dam contains the greatest number of intact resources that date from the CCC era while the area above the dam is composed of the most eclectic collection of resources, both contributing and noncontributing. In total, there are 24 contributing resources and 17 noncontributing resources. Most of the noncontributing resources were excluded due to age.

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DESCRIPTION

Wintersmith Park is located on the southeastern side of Ada, the county seat of Pontotoc County. Centered on Wintersmith Lake, the park features a rugged, wooded ravine on the south end and rolling, open land on the north end. Dotting the landscape are features created by a Civilian Conservation Corps camp during a nine month period in 1933 and '34. A paved road, Scenic Drive and Wintersmith Drive, encircles the bulk of the property and serves as the western border of the park. Stone bridges and culverts carry the roadbed over the streams and ditches that feed the lake.

At the north end of the park, in the area bounded by Wintersmith Drive, Country Club Road, East 18th Street and Scenic Drive, the ground is open and rolling. The westernmost section features a stone entry gate constructed by the CCC. The gate features two battered piers flanking Scenic Drive. The piers have marble plaques facing 18th Street and curving wing walls. Just east of the junction of Scenic Drive and Wintersmith Drive, the Wintersmith Drive roadbed is carried over a small, native stone and concrete slab bridge that was constructed by the CCC.

Just west of the entry and north of the bridge are two noncontributing buildings, Jones Chapel (Schoolhouse) and the park superintendent's residence, both of which are historic buildings moved into the park. The 1907 schoolhouse was moved in 1990 and the c. 1925 superintendent's house was moved in 1958. On Wintersmith Drive, the roadbed is carried over a large ditch by a concrete slab bridge constructed in 1939 by the Works Projects Administration.

The area east of the schoolhouse is dominated by the municipal swimming pool and bathhouse. Built in 1958 and reflecting a Modernist architectural vocabulary, the bathhouse and 50 meter pool are noncontributing due to age.

East of the pool complex is a small ditch. Wintersmith Drive is carried over it by another WPA slab bridge. A picnic area defines this section; scattered noncontributing concrete picnic tables cluster around large trees. A concrete block restroom facility built in 1959 is located near the junction of Wintersmith Drive and Country Club Road. A recently built (c. 1990) Southwestern Bell utility building stands just to the north of the restroom.

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Faced with native stone and capped with a wood shingled, gabled roof, the utility building blends in well with its surroundings.

West of County Club Road and east of Wintersmith Drive as it turns southward, the park is more heavily wooded. At the junction of Wintersmith Drive and Country Club Road is the Park Maintenance facility. Consisting of a concrete block, flat roof building, built c. 1959, and two sheet metal sheds, they are noncontributing due to age. Just south of its junction with Country Club Road, Wintersmith Drive is carried over a small stream by a CCC-built round arch bridge. A small stone culvert is just south of the bridge. East of the road at this point is the zoo compound. The zoo consists of a number of woven wire enclosures and small animal shelters and was started in 1953. An access road is located at the south end of the zoo compound. The access road forms a "T" intersection with Wintersmith Drive. A small, noncontributing picnic shelter is located at the southeast corner of the access road and Wintersmith Drive intersection. Three more CCC-built stone culverts lie south of the intersection, along with a small stone arch bridge. From this point, Wintersmith Drive curves westward, following the contour of the lakeshore as it narrows near the dam.

East of Wintersmith Drive, near the south edge of the lake, the park extends eastward, encompassing an area of approximately nine acres. This heavily wooded tract slopes upward from the roadbed, rising in elevation over fifty feet. Located near the top of the rise, at the easternmost boundary of the park, lie the petrified remains of a tree, discovered and excavated by members of the CCC, whose camp was located at the foot of the hill, near the road. There are no extant remains of the camp, only scattered bricks and stones from foundations and chimneys.

The park boundary returns to Wintersmith Drive near the location of another round arch bridge. From that point, the boundary for the park is the outside edge of the right-of-way of Wintersmith Drive, just as it is on the west side of Scenic Drive.

The focus of the Wintersmith Park Historic District lies within the area encompassed by Wintersmith and Scenic drives. Wintersmith Lake, created by the damming of Lake Creek in 1907, and the ravine below the dam are the areas that

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the CCC concentrated their efforts. A trail was constructed that winds its way along both banks of the creek in the ravine. Now paved to provide better access, the trail features small stone culverts and native stone steps. It crosses the creek over a bridge built initially by the CCC and later rebuilt by the WPA. Near this trail bridge is the amphitheater, cut out of the hillside by the boys of the CCC. It features three sections of limestone seats with slate caps. Just south of the amphitheater, near its junction with Scenic Drive, Wintersmith Drive is carried over the creek by a large, stone, round arch bridge.

The creek itself features two man-made focal points -- natural-looking rock dams constructed by the CCC to create wading and fishing pools. There were originally three dams, but one fell into disrepair and was cleared away in the 1980s.

North of the 1907 lake dam, the park is open, with large grassy areas and a scattering of shade trees. Near the dam is a small building that houses the Girl Scouts/Fireflies. A small gabled building, it is clad in petrified wood; it has a concrete block addition. On the north shore of the lake, the CCC-built bathhouse and concession building is the focal point of the park. Now referred to as Wintersmith Lodge, it is a large, native stone building with a sweeping, cross-gabled roof.

East of the lodge, a stone wall defines the change in grade that separates the lodge from the picnic area. A cluster of WPA-built stone and concrete picnic tables lies between the wall and a small stream. East of the stream is an area known as "kids park." It consists of a large number of picnic tables, both WPA-built and later, noncontributing tables, and noncontributing picnic shelters. A concession stand and a miniature golf course are surrounded by the tracks of a mini train built by the Kiwanis Club of Greater Ada in the 1950's. All are noncontributing. A number of footbridges, built by the WPA, dot the area north of the lake as they carry paths over the numerous ditches and streams.

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East of the lake is a large monkey pit, a circular, concrete structure that once housed a population of spider monkeys. Built in the 1950s, it is a noncontributing resource.

The lakeshore also owes its look to the CCC. The boys cleared trees and cattails and constructed a swimming pool and diving tower just south of the lodge. The original pool was closed and demolished when a newer pool was constructed in the 1950s. All that remains of the CCC-built pool is the structure of the diving tower, subsequently converted into an artistic fountain and is noncontributing. Two contributing concrete fishing piers jut into the lake west of the lodge; they were put in place by the WPA. Another noncontributing pier is located on the west side of the lake, near the Firefly cabin.

The park has been in use as a recreational facility since the lake was created in 1907. It grew in popularity after the improvements made by the CCC and WPA in the 1930s. Its continued popularity is evidenced by the improvements made since then. Wintersmith Park retains its integrity of location and setting. The design wrought by the NPS and CCC is evident, as are the materials and the workmanship that went into creating the park. It retains its integrity of setting, association and feeling and remains an excellent representation of a community park designed by the National Park Service and created by the CCC.

Contributing Resources

- 1. Entry Gate (structure):** Constructed in 1934 by the CCC, the entry gate consists of two native stone, battered piers with curving stone walls. The stones are roughly cut and loosely jointed. Each pier has a marble plaque inscribed with the name of the park and lists of the park commissioners. The west pier has an original 1934 plaque; the east pier has a plaque that dates from a 1984 refurbishment. (Photo #1)
- 2. Road Bridge No. 1 (structure):** Constructed in 1934 by the CCC. This concrete slab bridge carries Wintersmith Drive over a small stream. It consists of a concrete slab deck supported on rough, irregular ashlar stone

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abutments and a central pier. It has stone wing walls and a low stone side wall that consists of large stone blocks capped with two courses of smaller, flat blocks. The road surface is modern asphalt. (Photo # 2)

3. **Bathhouse/Concession Building (building):** Built in 1934 by the CCC, work was completed after the camp left in 1934 by FERA labor. The centerpiece of the north side of the park. Built of native stone and timber, it features a long, low cross-gabled roof with exposed log purlins. The roof originally featured wood shakes, but these were replaced after a 1940s fire with asphalt shingles. The roof deck is beadboard. The gable walls are of vertical planks while the main walls are stone. The west gable features a large, exterior stone chimney. The central cross-gabled section features the main entrance on the north side and large, multi-pane casement windows in the gables. The entrance has a plank door with iron strap hinges and is flanked by window openings. All window and entry openings have wooden beam headers; the windows have stone sills. A terrace opens off of the south side, facing the lake. The interior is broken into three spaces. The wings feature large, open rooms with exposed stone walls and wooden beams. The core section once held the changing rooms. A fire damaged the east wing in the late 1940s. The roof was repaired in the 1950s after sitting open to the elements for almost a decade. (Photo #s 3 & 4)
4. **Rock Wall (structure):** Built 1934 by CCC. Consisting of dry-laid, sandstone rocks, this wall separates the grade between the bath house and the picnic area. There are two sets of stone steps; one leads toward the picnic tables, one leads toward the former swimming area to the south. The wall ranges from five feet in height at the north end to the height of a single stone at the south end as the slope diminishes toward the lake.
5. **Picnic Area (object):** Built in 1939 by the WPA. This area consists of a half-dozen concrete picnic tables with stone bases. The slab table tops are stamped with the WPA shield and the bases are coursed sandstone that matches the stonework of the CCC structures. In 1952, the city had additional tables constructed. These match those of the WPA, but lack the shield on the slab and have concrete block bases rather than stone. There are two of these tables in this area. (photo # 24, typical)

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6. **Fishing Piers (structure):** Built 1940. These concrete slab piers are located just east of the bath house. They are concrete slabs supported by steel posts sunk into the lake bottom. They replaced wood and stone piers that had been built by the CCC.
7. **Firefly Cabin (building):** Built c. 1940. One story, square plan building with a side-gabled roof. The wall material is petrified wood of unknown origin. The wood plank door is centered. A single wood sash 1/1 window is offset on the west side of the facade. Two pairs of metal sash casement windows are on the gable ends. A concrete block addition was made to the rear of the building in the 1980s. It has doors on each wall and matching casement windows. (Photo # 7)
8. **Lake Dam (structure):** Built in 1907; additions in 1940, 1981. Located at southwest corner of lake as a continuation of an earthen dam. The dam is of monolithic concrete construction. It is approximately one hundred feet in length and has a slight parabola. There is a notched spillway centered. The creek bed is approximately 30 feet below the top of the dam; two small discharge pipes are located at the base. The dam was strengthened by the WPA in 1940. A concrete wing wall was built on the east side, below the dam and steps were added to the spillway notches, allowing foot access across the dam. A steel bridge and walkway was built over the top of the dam in the 1980s to alleviate the danger of walking across. (photo # 25)
9. **Hiking Trail (structure):** Built 1933 by the CCC. The trail encompasses the lake and ravine. Around the lake, the trail runs close to the water's edge. In the ravine area, the trail meanders, taking full advantage of the best viewsapes the terrain provides. It was hard-surfaced in the 1980s to provide better all weather use. This does not destroy the trail's main design element - the careful planning that provided the most pleasant sightlines.
10. **Picnic Area (object):** Built c. 1939 by the WPA. There is no evidence that the CCC constructed any facilities here. There are only the remains of two WPA picnic tables here; their tops broken by vandals. The site is a clearing between the hiking trail and the creek. At one time, it was the

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location of one of three dams built by the CCC (Dam #1).

11. **Trail Culverts (structure):** Built in 1934 by the CCC. The hiking trail is dotted, especially on the west side of the creek, by a number of small stone culverts that allow water to drain from the upslope side of the ravine into the creek. The culverts are built of stone and come in two basic forms - arched and flat, each with its own degree of size and artistic merit. There are 4 of them on the trail. (photo # 9 - typical)
12. **Dam # 2 (structure):** Built in 1934 by the CCC. The second of three dams spanning lake Creek, dam # 1 was located near the picnic area, just below the lake dam, It has been removed. Dam # 2 consists of nine to twelve courses of dry laid, flat stones. These are set in stepped courses, allowing spillover water to cascade. The dam has a slight curve; it meets the bank at stone bastion-like structures. These are located just off the trail and afford a pleasant view during full foliage. (photo # 10 and 11)
13. **Trail Bridge (structure):** Built in 1934 by the CCC; rebuilt in 1940 by the WPA. Originally built of cedar planks and poles set on stone abutments, the trail bridge crosses Lake Creek near the amphitheater. Rot to the wooden elements of the bridge necessitated its replacement by 1940. The WPA workers added a flat, concrete slab deck to the existing stone piers. There are three sets of battered stone piers, one at each end and one mid-stream. The rails are tubular steel, painted red. (photo # 23)
14. **Amphitheater (structure):** Built in 1934 by the CCC. Blasted out of the ravine slope, the amphitheater features three sections of stone seats. There are 30 rows. The seats are made up of a sandstone block base with a slate cap. The north edge of the amphitheater drops off into the ravine and is supported by a stone retaining wall. The south side has a gently curving wall that separates it from the wooded area. Stone steps divide the sections. The first three rows of the central section were removed in the 1950s; a stage was built in their place. The concrete foundation for the stage is visible, but unobtrusive. (photo # 5 and 6)
15. **Dam # 3 (structure):** Built in 1934 by the CCC. Located between the trail

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bridge and the large road bridge, this was the third water feature built by the CCC to create wading/fishing pools in Lake Creek. Less elaborate than dam # 2, this dam features a less formal, man-made look than dam # 2. The flat stones are laid in irregular courses and the connection to the banks seems more natural. (photo # 12)

16. **Road Bridge No. 2 (structure):** Built in 1934 by the CCC. This large bridge carries Wintersmith Drive over Lake Creek. It features a round arch barrel of poured concrete and a facing of native sandstone. The irregular cut stones are well-joined, showing the mastery of stonework learned by the CCC boys during the course of the project. The bridge is 60 feet in length; the arch spans 20 feet. The side walls extend three feet above the roadbed and are 24 inches thick at the capstone. (photo # 14)
17. **Trail Steps (structure):** Built 1933-34 by the CCC. As the trail makes its way along the east side of Lake Creek, the topography that it traverses is more varied. At a number of points along the trail, it became necessary to construct steps. Typically, these steps are of flat stone with additional stonework as border. For safety reasons, steel hand rails were added in the 1980s. There are 4 sets of steps on the trail. (photo # 13, typical)
18. **Road Culvert (structure):** Built in 1933-34 by the CCC. Wintersmith Drive, on the east side of the park, crosses a number of small ditches and streams. There are four culverts employed in crossing these obstacles. Built of concrete faced with native sandstone, the culverts match in design their smaller versions on the trail system. There are two types of culvert represented - arched and boxed. The box culverts have concrete slab decks with dirt fill and road surface on top. The walls are stone. The arched culverts have smaller spans but similar configurations. There are four culverts on Wintersmith Drive between the junction with Country Club Drive and the south end of the park. (photo # 22, typical)
19. **Petrified Tree (site):** The remains of a petrified tree lay immediately east of the former CCC camp. First discovered by a CCC work crew, the site was cleared and a path constructed by the WPA in 1940 and quickly became a novel attraction. The partially excavated tree now is surrounded by a chain link fence to discourage vandalism.

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20. **Road Bridge No. 3 (structure):** Built in 1934 by the CCC. Similar in form but much smaller in scale to Road Bridge No. 2, this bridge spans a small creek that drains into the east side of Wintersmith Lake. A round arch, concrete barrel is faced with irregularly coursed sandstone blocks. The arch spans approximately 6 feet; the total length of the structure is 22 feet. The joints are tight. Each end features a small buttress that carries up to the top of the road wall. (photo # 15)
21. **Road Bridge No. 4 (structure):** Built in 1934 by the CCC. Located on Wintersmith Drive just south of the junction with Country Club Drive, this small bridge is easily the most picturesque structure in the park. It is constructed of concrete faced with sandstone. The arch is depressed and spans a small stream; the span is approximately 15 feet. The bridge length is 35 feet. The roadbed follows the arch of the bridge, as does the road wall. Each end has a pier with a large cap stone. The road wall is 1.5 feet in height. (photo # 16)
22. **Trail Bridges (structure):** Built in 1939 by the WPA. East of the bath house, in the area of the "kids park," the trail system crosses a number of ditches and streams. The crossings are made on a number of foot bridges constructed by the WPA. These are simple slabs of concrete, each approximately 20 feet in length and reinforces with steel beams. The WPA shield is stamped into the surface. New steel hand rails were recently installed, some are mounted in original, battered, stone piers. There are three of these contributing foot bridges. (photo # 24)
23. **Road Bridge No. 5 (structure):** Built by the WPA in 1940. Carrying Wintersmith Drive over a small stream is this simple, concrete slab bridge. Similar in design to the CCC-built Bridge No. 1, this bridge features concrete wing walls, a low road wall and a simple slab surface. A midstream pier carried the center load of the roadbed. (photo # 24)
24. **Road Bridge No. 6 (structure):** Built by the WPA in 1940. Located between Bridge No. 1 and Bridge No. 5 on Wintersmith Drive, it is identical to Bridge No. 5.

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Noncontributing Resources

25. **District 61 School (building):** Located just east of the main entry, this building, also known as Jones Chapel, was built c. 1907. It was originally located southwest of Ada and was moved a number of times, lastly in 1990. While an excellent restoration, it is noncontributing to the park. (photo # 17)
26. **Park Superintendent's Residence (building):** Built c. 1925, this building is actually two frame bungalows joined together. They were moved to the park from the city in 1958. The building has asbestos shingle siding and is noncontributing to the park. (photo # 18)
27. **Wintersmith Pool (structure):** This fifty-meter, Olympic sized pool was built in 1958, replacing the CCC-built pool at the lake's edge. It is noncontributing due to age. (photo # 19)
28. **Wintersmith Pool Bath House (building):** Built in 1958, this one story, concrete block building features a flat concrete roof and bands of louvered vents under the eaves. It reflects a Modernist tradition in design. It is noncontributing due to age. (photo # 19)
29. **Picnic Area (object):** East of the pool is a collection of picnic tables built buy the city sometime after 1950. These tables do not resemble those built by the WPA; they have bases cast from corrugated tubes. They constitute a noncontributing resource due to age.
30. **Southwestern Bell utility Building (building):** This building was built in the 1990s to house telephone relay equipment. It is constructed with a veneer of native stone with a rustic, gabled roof. While stylistically it fits in well with the park, it is noncontributing due to age.

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31. **Restroom Facilities (building):** There are two of these concrete block restroom facilities in the park, one near the junction of Wintersmith Drive and Country Club Road and one near the monkey pit. They feature shed roofs with clerestory lighting. They constitute a noncontributing resource due to age. (photo # 24)
32. **Park Maintenance Facility, Office and Garage (building):** Built in 1961-62, this concrete block building features a flat roof and a recessed facade. Simple fenestration, including large garage doors, demonstrate its utilitarian nature. Noncontributing due to age. (photo # 26)
33. **Park Maintenance Facility, Shop (building):** Built in 1961. Gabled roof, block foundation, wood shingle walls. Entry centered on north side. Noncontributing due to age. (photo # 26)
34. **Park Maintenance Facility, Shed (building):** Built c. 1960. Simple frame, shed roof storage shed. Noncontributing due to age. (photo # 26)
35. **Concession Stand (Building):** Built c. 1960. Originally a concrete block, flat roof building built by the local Kiwanis Club, it has since has an exterior cladding of vertical wood planks and a gabled roof added. Noncontributing due to age. (photo # 24)
36. **Kiwanis Cannonball (structure):** Constructed in 1959 by the local Kiwanis Club. This small train follows a path that winds a circuitous path around "kids park." There is a small, wood framed engine house near the concession stand and a mini-golf course contained within a U-shaped bend. Noncontributing due to age. (photo # 21)
37. **Picnic Shelter (structure):** Built c. 1980. In the "kids park" there are three timber-framed, gabled picnic shelters. They have concrete slab decks. They constitute a noncontributing resource in the park due to age. (photo # 21)

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38. **Monkey House (structure):** Built c. 1955 by the city. This round structure is constructed of poured concrete. It now has a tall chain link fence around the perimeter of the pit and a chain link "tent" that protects the interior from thrown projectiles. Earth is mounded up the exterior sides of the concrete walls and the service entry is on the south side, below grade. Noncontributing due to age. (photo # 20)
39. **Trail Bridge (structure):** Along with the WPA-built trail bridges in and around "kids Park" are simple concrete slab bridges built by the city, primarily in the 1980s. There are three of these bridges, constituting one noncontributing resource due to age.
40. **Zoo (structure):** Constructed in 1955 by the city. Consisting of a series of interconnected pens of chain link, the zoo compound houses llamas, ostriches, and other assorted animals. Each pen has a small shelter house. The zoo is considered a noncontributing resource due to age.
41. **Diving Tower (structure):** Built 1934 by the CCC. The tower consists of a small island in Wintersmith Lake with a circular stone base approximately five feet tall. The base is capped now with a free form metal sculptural fountain. The original tower featured boards and platforms and was located in the lake at the edge of the former pool. It was altered for safety concerns soon after the CCC pool was removed. Noncontributing due to alteration.

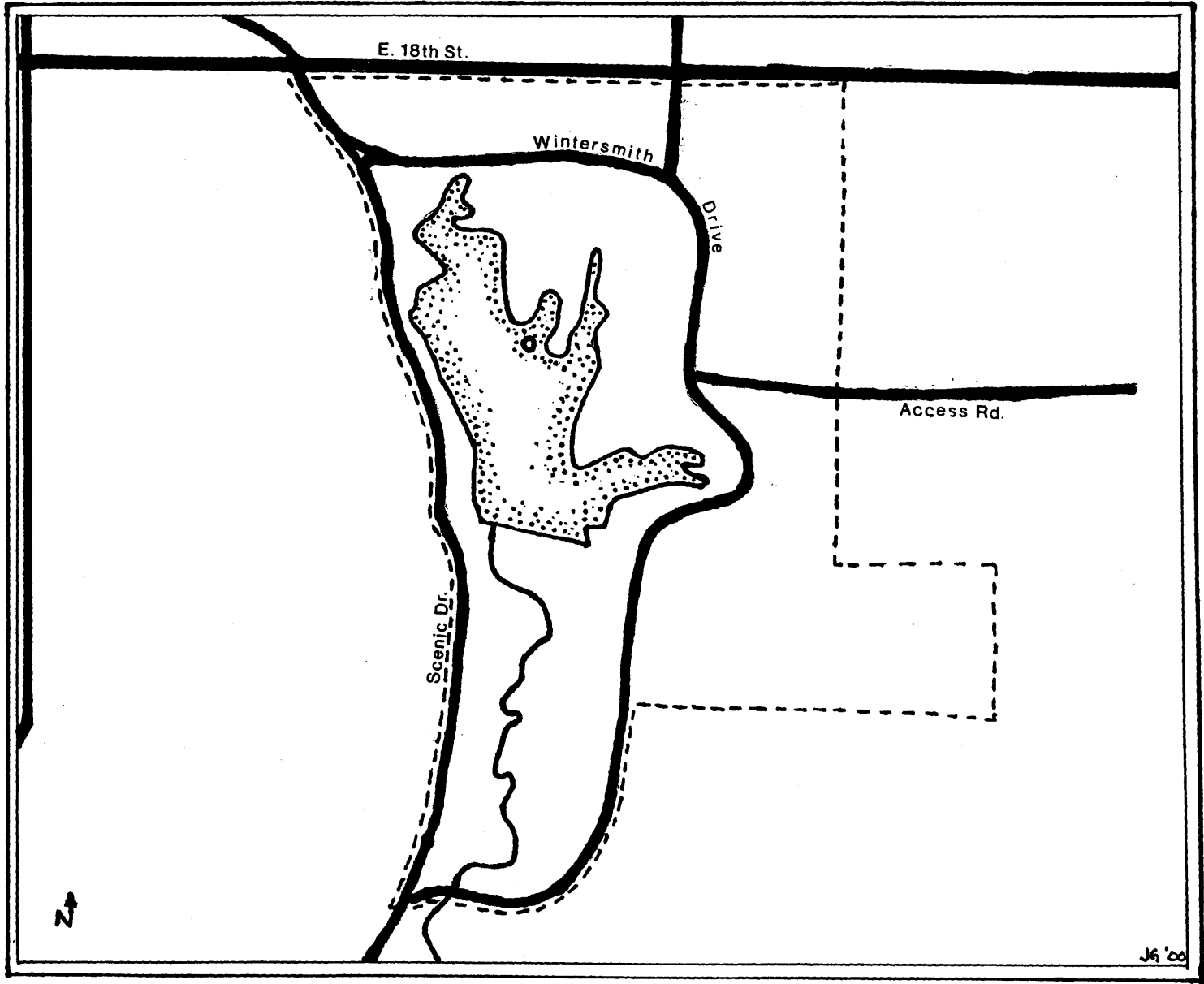
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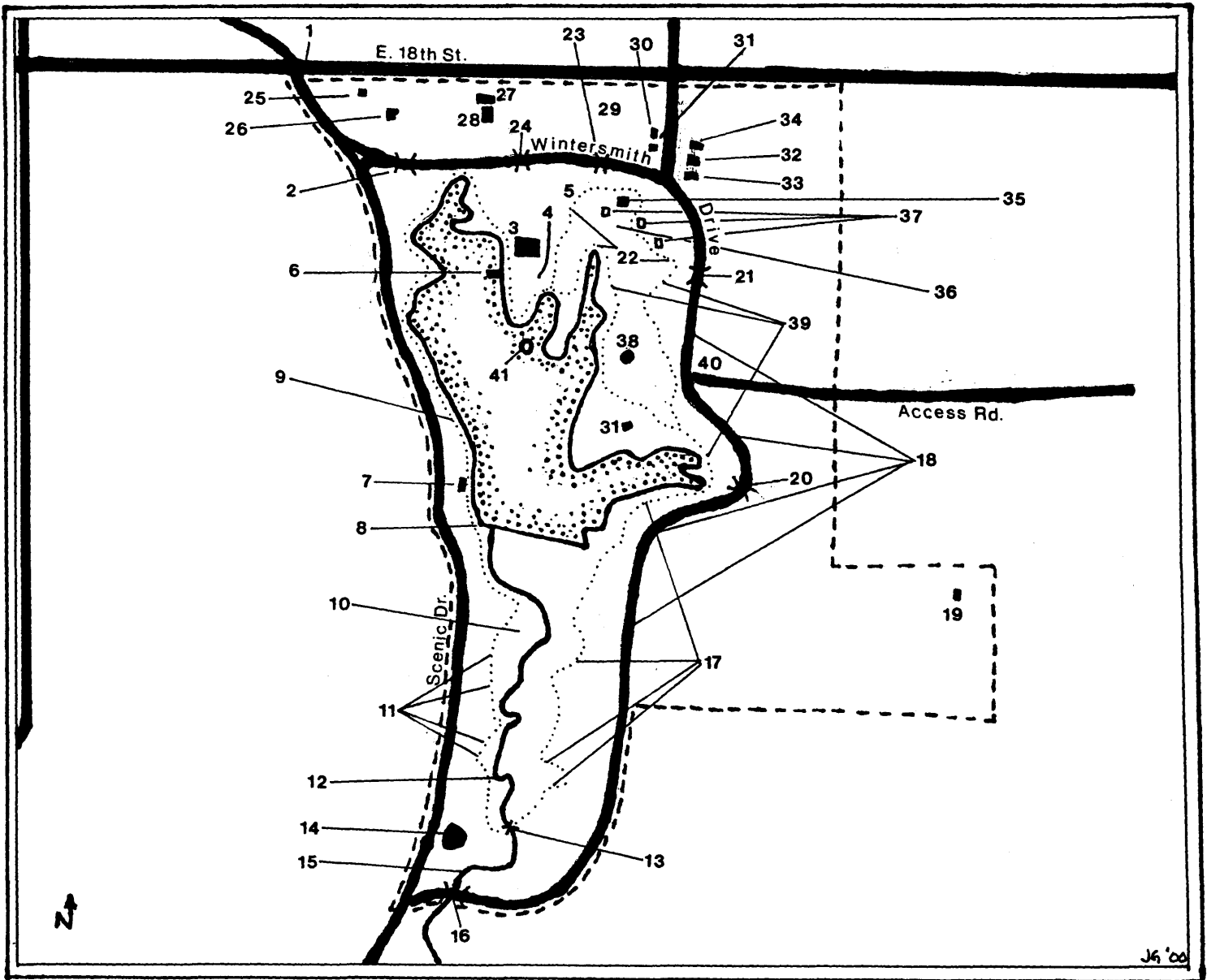
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Statement of Significance

Wintersmith Park had its genesis with the creation of the Oklahoma Portland Cement Company and the need of the city of Ada for a steady water supply. The city agreed to build a dam southeast of the city limits and Oklahoma Portland cement Company utilized the resource to become a leading industry in the area. The city of Ada financed the construction of the dam that would create a 60 acre reservoir; Oklahoma Portland Cement Company used the ample supply of water in creating Ada's largest industry. The lake was named after Frances Wintersmith, the wife of one of the cement company's founders.¹ The lure of this body of fresh water in such close proximity of town was strong. Soon, the lake became not only a source of water for industry and citizen, but a source for recreation. Undergoing a major facelift in the 1930's, Wintersmith Park, as it came to be known, became the crown jewel in Ada's park system. Through the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps and later the Works Progress Administration and the City of Ada Parks Department, the park was transformed from an overgrown "swimming hole" into a designed landscape that exemplified the philosophy of the National Park Service.

The resources that comprise the Wintersmith Park Historic District reflect the design philosophy of the National Park Service from the 1930s. The landscape design was implemented by a resident camp of the Civilian Conservation Corps. The Wintersmith Park Historic District is eligible for the National Register of historic places under Criterion A for its association with the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps and for its recreational and entertainment importance to the city of Ada. The District is also eligible under Criterion C as an excellent example of the architectural and landscape design philosophy of the National Park Service as applied to a metropolitan park in Ada, Oklahoma.

¹ Kroecker, Marvin E. and Guy WLogsdon, *Ada, Oklahoma: Queen City of the Chickasaw Nation*. Virginia Beach, Virginia: Donning Company. 1998. P. 27

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Ada and Recreation

Located near the northern boundary of the Chickasaw Nation, the City of Ada had its modest beginnings seventeen years before statehood. The area that encompasses the present city was attractive to white and mixed blood settlers; it had ample water, good grazing land, and timber. A Texan named Reed started the settlement that was to become Ada in 1890. He opened a small store house near the homes of the Daggs brothers. Reed applied for a post office in 1890. "Reed's Store" and "Sulphur Springs" were names for the settlement that were rejected by the postal service. Finally, in 1891, Ada, Reed's eldest daughter's name, was accepted. The little settlement did not prosper, but managed to grow slowly over the next few years.²

As with many small settlements, the impetus to grow or the agent of demise was the railroad. A line that would connect Sapulpa to Texas was planned; its route would pass very near the little Ada settlement. Soon after the surveyors laid the route, a new townsite was platted and the "old town" of Ada packed up and moved a short distance to its present location. This was in 1900. By 1907, three rail lines went through Ada.

With rail access came prosperity, in the form of industry, in agriculture, in business. Thousands of bales of cotton were compressed in Ada and shipped out by rail. Livestock and grains were transported as well. A flour mill, cotton gins, and a cotton oil mill added to the industrial development of Ada. The Oklahoma Portland Cement Company opened in 1907, giving Ada a place in markets beyond its immediate region. A number of banking institutions were attracted to this prosperous little town.³

Life in a growing town or city revolves around more than just business and industry. A normal school, known as East Central, was established in 1909. Churches and social clubs thrived. New schools were built and many homes and business buildings were built in the first two decades of the century. By 1920, the population had reached 8,000.

2 Kroeker, pp. 17-20

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 27-47

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The creation of the reservoir known as Wintersmith Lake added yet another recreational opportunity to the citizens of Ada. Glenwood Park, on the west side of the city, had been created for the recreational use of the locals. It featured trees and grass and a fountain, and in 1921, a swimming pool. Byrds Mill, site of the town's water supply, was also a popular recreational spot for the locals.



60 ACRE RESERVOIR, 1 MILE EAST OF ADA, OKLA.

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Throughout the 1920s, Ada grew and prospered. New industry moved in and the population grew steadily. In 1929, the stock market crash brought an end to the far-reaching visions of Ada's Chamber of Commerce. Plans for aggressive expansion of the city, for the creation of new parks, new roadways, new businesses all came to a halt.

Like many towns across Oklahoma, Ada suffered economically from the effects of the Depression. Hardest hit were agricultural-related businesses, small stores, and industries. As newly elected President Roosevelt began to implement his New Deal for economic recovery, Ada jumped at the chance to participate in the programs. When the announcement was made about the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Chamber of Commerce of Ada put in a bid for the city to receive a CCC camp.

While many of the city's citizens were affected by the economic downturn, Ada was lucky in that in 1934 a great new oil field opened up just southeast of town. The Fitts Field spurred an economic recovery in the town that preceded the recovery of the nation as a whole by four years. Business activity, real estate transactions, and industrial work were all spurred on by the booming Fitts Field.⁴

The city survived the privations of the Depression and moved into an era of unprecedented prosperity during the decade of the 1940s. War production, on many scales, brought higher wages. Increased wages and increased leisure meant that the city's park facilities were in ever increasing demand. During the early 1950s, after a fire at the Wintersmith Park bath house, a plan was developed to improve and expand the assets at all of the city's parks. Wintersmith benefited by the construction of a new pool, zoo, and monkey pit.

From its inception as a water source for the city, Wintersmith Lake and the park surrounding it has long been the crown jewel in Ada's park system. Central to its importance is the designed landscape created by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The naturalistic structures and buildings reflect the design philosophy of the National Park Service. Wintersmith Park remains, despite later improvements, an excellent example of that philosophy.

⁴ Kroecker, p. 91

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Wintersmith Park: The CCC Creates a Landscape

At the behest of the City of Ada, Company 834 of the Civilian Conservation Corps was assigned to Wintersmith Park. Company 834 was raised in May of 1933 at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The first enrollees were primarily from eastern Oklahoma. Initially, the crew was sent to Wyoming to work in the Medicine bow National Forest. In Wyoming, their duties revolved around roadside clearing and campground improvements. As the good weather season came to a close, the camp set out by train to its new quarters in Ada, arriving October 9, 1933.5

Prior to the arrival of the CCC company, a contract was let to a local building contractor to construct barracks and other buildings on a site in the park. The site chosen was on the east side of the lake, due east of the dam. The camp consisted of a number of wood framed, unpainted buildings, lined in orderly rows up the slope east of the lake. A central square was formed by the buildings. The camp was not yet complete when the boys of the CCC arrived. They had to live in tents while the buildings were completed.

The project was designated SP-5-0. "SP" stood for State Park, one of three designated camp types. The others were "SC" and "F," for Soil Conservation and Forestry. There were a number of other designators, but these three dominated in Oklahoma. The number was the camp designation under the camp type. The "O" stood for Oklahoma. The camp's work was to include clearing and replanting of trees, creation of a road and trail system, and construction of an open air theater, a pool, and a bathhouse.

Civilian Conservation Corps enrollees were young men, mostly between the ages of 18 and 25, who came from a disadvantaged background. To be eligible, the prospective enrollee had to meet minimal criteria. They must come from a single parent home or from a home where both parents were on relief. They boys enrolled for six month tours; they were allowed to re-enroll as long as they remained eligible. Local county relief agencies were generally responsible for recruiting candidates. The enrollees were paid in the neighborhood of \$30 per

5 *Civilian Conservation Corps Pictorial Review: Oklahoma District*, June, 1934, p. 47

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month. The bulk of the money was withheld and sent to the family; usually the enrollee kept \$5 for his personal use. The CCC camps were supervised by Regular Army officers, usually Captains. In addition, there were separate camps for Indians, Negroes, and veterans.

The camps were run in a quasi-militaristic manner. There were musters and reveille and exercise, but there wasn't the level of discipline demanded of a military unit. Enrollees could and did desert. There was no legal punishment, usually only a letter of admonition from the commander to the parents, warning of future consequences when applying for work. Deserters were also billed for food and clothing that disappeared with them.

The U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps provided clothing for the camps. The basic CCC uniform consisted of denim clothing fashioned similar to Army fatigues, but designed to look "unmilitary". The enrollees were issued warm and cold weather gear, barrack bags, shoes, and assorted toiletries. The Quartermaster Corps also provided food for the camps, an arduous effort considering the remote location of some of the Forestry camps. The Quartermasters also were in charge of moving the camps from one work location to another.⁶

The camps were structured much like a military company. The population of each camp was about 200. There would be an Army officer in charge, along with a camp doctor and staff. Often, these men were military as well, especially in the first two or three years of the program. The men would be divided into groups according to their specialty or work status. There would be a headquarters section that oversaw the running of the camp itself, a mess hall section in charge of feeding the enrollees, and work sections, assigned to the field. Each section had a leader and subleaders. These men, chosen from the ranks of the enrollees, were paid at a slightly higher scale. If needed, LEMs, or Locally Experienced Men, were hired as foremen or supervisors for particular jobs. These were often men with familiarity in certain construction or

⁶ Fitzgerald, Captain Francis V. *The Organization and Supply of the Civilian Conservation Corps*, "The Quartermaster Review." Washington: The Quartermaster Association, Vol. XIII, No. 1. July-August, 1933, pp. 7-19

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demolition techniques.⁷

Camp number 824 arrived from Wyoming on October 9, 1933. It was understrength; the first recruits were reaching the end of their 6 month enlistment. New enrollees from Pontotoc County filled the ranks. Almost immediately, the company began its work. Captain W. A. Ray, a Field Artillery officer out of Fort Sill, was in charge. Being a veteran group, work details were already assigned. As the headquarters section took care of getting the tent camp and later the new barracks in shape, the work details initiated their endeavors in the park.

Before construction could begin on the park's new facilities, a plan had to be created. Each camp, whether it be Soil Conservation, Forestry, or State Park, had expert technicians assigned to it. Forestry and Soil Conservation camps had experts from the Department of the Interior or the department of Agriculture. The Park camps had experts from the National Park Service. It was early on recognized that technical assistance was important and planning necessary. Herbert Maier, head of the Third District (covering Oklahoma and surrounding states) for Emergency Conservation Work, gave the following recommendation in his first report to Washington:

1. Appoint a graduate landscape architect as one of the landscape foremen, whose primary duty it will be to work on the drafting board, plan the work projects and develop (sic) a master plan of the park into which, not only the present work will fit, but which plan will act as a guide to future development.
2. Organize, where necessary, from the enrolled men, a survey party under one of the foremen to adequately survey the park. Contour intervals may vary from five to twenty feet depending on the probable use of the area at a given point.

⁷ Graf, Captain Enoch, *The Army's Greatest Peace-Time Achievement*, "The Quartermaster Review." Washington: The Quartermaster Association, Vol. XV, No. 1. July-August, 1935, pp. 7-19

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3. The work of the enrolled men is to be first confined to clean-up and fire control work until planning has been carried along.⁸

As the plans for the park were being developed on site by Charles E. Kroeger and his assistant, D. V. Shuhart, the men of Company 834 began the work of clearing underbrush from the ravine below the dam and reeds and willows from the marshy edges of the lake. In addition, one of the first orders of business was to improve the road on the north side of the park that led to the dam.⁹

The lake level was lowered to provide access to the cattails that lined the lake. Working out of tents while the barracks were being constructed, "Clusters of young huskies can be seen wielding shovels, axes, and saws as they clear out the underbrush, chop down weeds, burn stumps and bring a neat appearance to the property adjoining the road which turns into the park at the northwest corner."¹⁰

Integral to the design of the park is the use of the natural ravine created by Lake Creek below the dam. Called "the canyon," it featured rock outcroppings on steeply sloped banks overlooking the meander of the creek. The landscape designers took note of the possibility for a trail system that would best showcase the canyon's natural beauty. "Footpaths will be cleared leading to the finest views of the park, especially on the east side which in the past has not been as easily accessible..."¹¹ Also planned at this time were the stone culverts and bridges that would be placed along the trail and road system. Most of the stone used for these projects would come from the northeast corner of the park. The park entrance gate and the continuation of the road beyond the park to the East Central campus was also begun at this early stage.¹²

⁸ Maier, Herbert, "Weekly Report, July 1, 1933; Third District, State Emergency Conservation Work."

⁹ "Plan Tasks For C.C.C. Worker," Ada Evening News. October 9, 1933, p. 1

¹⁰ "C.C.C. Workers Varied In Tasks," Ada Evening News. October 11, 1933, p. 1

¹¹ "Building trails In Park Program" Ada Evening News. November 8, 1933, p. 1

¹² *Ibid.*

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The design of the park was a working document, changing as need arose. The original site used for swimming by the citizens of Ada was near the dam, on the west side of the lake. There was located a small bathhouse and the park superintendent's quarters. The initial plan called for the new swimming facility to be located here, as well. After a visit by the chief landscape designer for the Park Service's regional office, H. H. Cornell, it was decided that the best location for the bathhouse and swimming area would be the north end of the lake.¹³

Clearing the banks of the lake was an arduous job, In addition to the cattails, over 250 willows were also cleared out. The trail system, which was to encircle the lake and the canyon, was to be graded and graveled and located about twenty five feet from the water's edge. Both the trail and the road would need new bridges and culverts to replace the old, narrow plank bridges. New concrete culverts were planned, to be faced with stone quarried nearby.¹⁴

The plan for the canyon area was ambitious, The trail would parallel Lake Creek on the west side and meander through the woods on the west side. Lake Creek would be altered; small, naturalistic "recreational dams" would be constructed, creating small pools for wading or fishing. The dams would serves as waterfalls in times of high water. Near the south end of the park would be two major structures. An amphitheater would be carved out of the side of the ravine on the west edge of the park and a large, arched road bridge would span the creek and ravine.¹⁵

The trail and the bridges and all structures built in the park were to follow the design guidelines of the National Park Service. The design ethic of the Park Service created a style of construction and architecture that would later be called "National Park Service Rustic." The various projects at Wintersmith Park closely followed this design ethic, modified slightly to address the needs of a small, metropolitan park.

Typical of this Park Service Rustic design was the use of natural looking masonry. Structures and buildings were to blend into the landscape. Buildings

13 "Cornell Approves plans For C.C.C." Ada Evening News. November 26, 1933, p. 1

14 "C.C.C. Workers Making Progress," Ada Evening News. November 19, 1933, p. 1

15 "C.C.C. Builds Improved Park For This City," Ada Evening News. December 3, 1933, p. 1

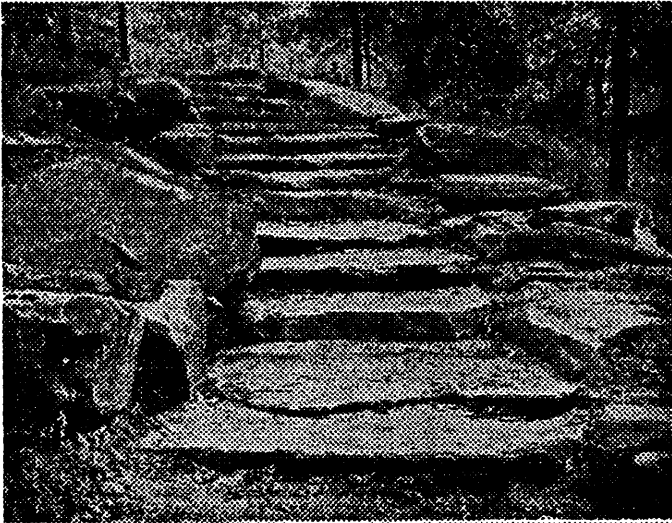
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in particular were considered as intrusions on the natural landscape. The design of buildings and other such structures was to be as unobtrusive as possible. Native stone, roughly fashioned, and timbers were the primary building materials used in this region of the country. A design that allowed the building to appear to be a part of the landscape, to "rise out of the ground," was deemed the best solution. Other landscape features, such as culverts and bridges, walls and steps, were to follow this same ethic.



Wintersmith Municipal Park, Oklahoma

View of trail steps at Wintersmith Park.

(from Park and Recreation Structures, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office. 1938, p. 166)

The initial plan was for the CCC camp to remain in Ada for six months. The ambitious plans for the transformation of the park necessitated an extension. The landscape plan was all-encompassing. "No longer will the

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activities of the park be bunched along one shore for a short distance. Instead, every part will be open and easily reached."16 Residents who stopped by to watch the progress of the transformation were pleased. The old park was almost unrecognizable; the CCC men had skillfully created a landscape that looked more natural than nature. "The park as Ada has known it many years is already passing out of the picture. In its stead there is appearing a completed park, using all of the natural beauty of hill, woodland, and water with which the park is abundantly provided."17

Throughout the summer of 1934, the CCC camp continued the Wintersmith project. The north shore of the lake had been cleared of brush and reeds, the road around the park was graded and graveled, the trail system was well underway. The three largest projects were begun in the spring. The large bridge at the south end of the park was nearly completed by the beginning of summer; its companion at the south end of the park, the amphitheater, was started as the bridge project wound down. While stone from the park area had been used for the culverts and small bridges, the amount and size of blocks needed for the bridge and amphitheater necessitated use of a quarry five miles south of town.18

Up at the north end of the park, the swimming pool was being created. It was incorporated as a part of the lake itself. A semi-circular bank, lined with stone, was created along the shoreline. This stone bank was carried out into the lake, encircling an area approximately fifty yards in diameter. A stone island was built at the deep end, the base for a stone diving tower. The lake bottom was dredged and smoothed in preparation for the pouring of a concrete bottom for the pool. A sandy beach was created at the shoreline. An eight inch water line that runs from Byrd's Mill feeds the pool with fresh, clean water.

A low rise just north of the pool was chosen as the site for the new bathhouse/concession building. The design reflected the Park Service Rustic philosophy that was prevalent in building design for National and State parks.

16 "C.C.C. Workers Transforming Wintersmith Park Appearance," Ada Evening News. March 18, 1934, p. 1
17 *Ibid.* p. 1
18 "Largest bridge in Wintersmith Park Finished by C.C.C. Workers," Ada Evening News. April 15, 1934, p. 1

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The stone walls are roughly cut; the bases are flared, giving the illusion that they arise naturally out of the ground. Interior and exterior supporting members are unfinished or roughly finished wooden beams that came from Stringtown, in Atoka County. The interior spaces are open, featuring wooden floors and stone walls; the westernmost room functions as the lounge and features a large stone fireplace. The stone for the interior came from the Kiamichi Mountains, more than seventy-five miles away. The building is 128 feet long, with a low, sweeping, cross gabled roof. In addition to the lounge, it had men's and women's dressing areas, a concession stand, and storage space. The caretaker lived in an apartment above the entry. A stone terrace on the south side looked over the swimming pool.¹⁹

The CCC workers did more than just work on these buildings and structures, they also got the opportunity to play and learn. Several camp members took evening classes at East Central; others took advantage of sporting opportunities. The CCC camps in the area formed a baseball league and games were played between camps on the weekends.²⁰ Most of the time, the workers hung around the camp, exhausted after a hard day's work.

The CCC camp was located just east of the lake, on a small rise. East of the camp, the park juts out into the woods. It was back in this area that some of the workers stumbled upon the remains of a petrified tree. While a curiosity, it was not a priority for the CCC crew; only a few feet of the tree was excavated and a crude trail was cut to the site. Later, workers from the WPA would improve the trail and students from the University of Oklahoma would excavate to length of the forty foot, petrified trunk.

As the summer wound down, Company 824 got word that they would be moving from Ada. The city, led by the Chamber of Commerce, put in a bid for the camp to remain or to move a short distance to Byrd's Mill. The offer was rejected and the camp was slated to move to Lake Murray, near Ardmore, to join other companies on a large State Park project. According to H. H. Cornell, inspector of Oklahoma's CCC camps, the policy was to get the camps into state and

¹⁹ "Wintersmith Park Transformed Into Beautiful Rustic Playground By CCC," Ada Evening News. December 16, 1934, p. 8

²⁰ "C.C.C. League," Ada Evening News. September 10, 1934, p. 5. This story gives a schedule and results for a six team league.

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national parks and to discontinue the municipal park work.²¹ Camp 824 was scheduled to leave October 1. Due to the amount of work still needed on the bathhouse and amphitheater, the camp's stay was extended until November 1, 1934.²²

The camp did not leave as scheduled. The local authorities - the Chamber of Commerce, the park board, and concerned businessmen - convinced H.H. Cornell to give another extension, promising the release of additional funding for materials. Their efforts bought another month; the camp left for Ardmore on November 28, leaving behind Charles Kroeger and Robert Ferguson to supervise the completion of the bathhouse and amphitheater. The City of Ada had applied for Federal Emergency Relief Agency funds to pay for the necessary labor.²³

The bathhouse was completed under the supervision of Robert Ferguson by the end of the year. The amphitheater, under the supervision of Charles Kroeger, was never finished as planned. The masonry was completed, but a planned screen of hedges that would define the "stage" area was never planted.

The park was enthusiastically used by the citizens of Ada after the CCC left. By the end of the decade, additional improvements to the park were made by the WPA. The original wood and stone fishing piers were replaced, the large trail bridge was rebuilt and additional footbridges constructed, and picnic tables were built.²⁴

After the war, as the city prospered, the layout of the park changed little. The city did add features, building a new pool when the CCC-built pool became obsolete due to new sanitary requirements and adding new features like the zoo and monkey pit. These new features were all clustered at the north end of the park, leaving the canyon and the lake itself untouched, keeping to the original landscape design as defined by the original CCC/NPS plan. The hiking trail, the lodge (with the exception of repairs made after a 1950 fire), and the amphitheater remained much as the original intent had been, emphasizing the

²¹ "Wintersmith Park to be Finished," Ada Evening News. September 6, 1934, p. 1

²² "C.C.C. Camp Here until Nov. 1," Ada Evening News. September 16, 1934, p. 1

²³ "C.C.C. Camp Goes to Ardmore Site Early Tomorrow," Ada Evening News. November 27, 1934, p. 1

²⁴ "Park Improvements," Ada Evening News. June 28, 1939, p. 3

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natural beauty of the park's setting.

Design Philosophy of the National Park Service as Applied to Wintersmith Park

"Lamentable is the fact that during the six days given over to Creation, picnic tables and fireplaces, foot bridges, toilet facilities, and many other of man's requirements even in natural surroundings, were negligently and entirely overlooked."²⁵ These words open a book published by the National Park Service that illustrates in words, plans, and photographs the work done by the CCC in parks throughout the country. The philosophy behind each aspect of park creation, from landscaping to garbage disposal, is detailed. Examples are shown from every level of work, from National Parks to local municipal parks such as Wintersmith Park.

The use of a standard philosophy that is flexible enough to reflect the conditions of any locality allowed the Park Service to create a uniformity of expectation in its endeavors. Visitors to parks in the western states would feel the same comfort level as those in the east; park facilities would blend into the background and seem a part of the natural environment. Prominent in the design philosophy for parks is "...that structures, however well designed, almost never truly add to the beauty, but only the use, of a park of true natural distinction. Since the primary purpose of setting aside these areas is to conserve them as nearly as possible in their natural state, every structure, however necessary, can only be regarded as an intruder."²⁶

The emphasis was placed on a design that fit the environment, that utilized local, natural materials, and that avoided the modern, machine-made philosophy that was popular in architecture of the day. "The straight edge as a precision tool has little or no place in the park artisan's equipment."²⁷

²⁵ National Park Service, *Park Structures and Facilities*, Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior. 1935, p. 3

²⁶ *Ibid.* p. 3

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 6

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From the size, shape, and thickness of roof shingles to the placement and design of trail signs, every aspect of the built environment in park settings was evaluated. In Wintersmith Park, the building and structures built by the CCC are early examples of this design philosophy as applied to the confined space of a municipal park.

In Wintersmith Park, structures such as the entry, the recreational dams, and the bridges and culverts were designed to blend harmoniously into the landscape, to enhance the natural setting while remaining functional. "Trail steps, to justify their presence in natural areas, must facilitate walking to just an extent as will not corrupt this natural quality. Conversely, trail steps must not strive to emulate nature only to a degree that will not make them extremely hazardous in use."²⁸ Other structures are characterized and critiqued. "The culvert is too often handled as a conspicuous bridge, when in reality it is merely a retaining wall pierced by a drain. The facing of a culvert...should be first and always informal and inconspicuous."²⁹ It is easy to see the evolution of this design philosophy in Wintersmith Park. Trail culverts vary in appearance from miniature bridges to "natural" rock outcroppings.

In addition to amenities built by the CCC, Wintersmith Park's natural environment was also manipulated as part of the overall design. Dead and decaying trees were cleared out. "Injured" trees were treated and new trees brought in. Flowers were planted in strategic areas and timed to bloom throughout the year. Even with the manipulation of the setting, the emphasis was to keep the park's natural appearance, to forgo the look of a formal landscape. Wild growth was to be encouraged.³⁰ In areas of the canyon, less desirable growth was cleared, giving hikers along the path views of the creek, the recreational dams, and the large road bridge. Rock outcroppings on the ravine walls were manipulated to help prevent erosion until the new plantings could take root.

²⁸ *Park Structures and Facilities*. p. 37

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 44

³⁰ "Future care of Wintersmith Park is Opportunity for Civic Groups," *Ada Evening News*. December 23, 1934, p. 9

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The bathhouse followed the Park Service's axiom to use native materials in a rustic or "pioneer-like" design but with modern convenience and amenities. The need for functional, usable space is emphasized. The amphitheater also stayed close to the ethic espoused by the Park Service. It faces east, to protect the audience from the afternoon sun. It is built into the side of the ravine, utilizing the natural contour of the slope, minimizing the need to blast out rock.³¹

Even with later additions, Wintersmith Park retains the basic design elements as conceived by the National Park Service and constructed by the CCC. Its collection of stone structures, carefully placed in a natural and designed landscape, is exemplary of the early design philosophy of the National Park Service as applied to a municipal park. As such, the collection of resources that comprise the Wintersmith Park Historic District are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The District is also eligible for its importance in the recreational history of the City of Ada.

³¹ *Park Structures and Facilities*. p. 171

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UTM REFERENCES (continued)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing		
	5	<u>14</u>	<u>715300</u>	<u>3848710</u>	8	<u>14</u>	<u>714580</u>	<u>3848410</u>
	6	<u>14</u>	<u>714880</u>	<u>3848710</u>	9	<u>14</u>	<u>714620</u>	<u>3848900</u>
	7	<u>14</u>	<u>714740</u>	<u>3848420</u>	10	<u>14</u>	<u>714500</u>	<u>3849330</u>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Part of the east half, east half. Section 3, Township 3 N, Range 6 E, and the west half, NW quarter and SE quarter, NW quarter and the east 470 feet of SE quarter of NW and NE quarter, NE quarter, SW quarter in Section 2, Township 3 N. Range 6 E containing approximately 143.72 acres more or less.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

Encompasses the whole of Wintersmith Park, including those areas associated with the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1933-34.

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